

Memo To: All UH-Downtown PS Holders
From: Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz, President
Subject: Department Chair Policy

UH-Downtown/PS 10.A.17
Issue No. 1
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1. PURPOSE

This Policy Statement (PS) describes the terms of election and evaluation for department chairs and the process to be followed in making such elections and evaluations.

The evaluation of department chairs promotes the highest standards of professional performance, provides a record of individual achievement, enhances professional growth, and allows for the recognition of meritorious performance.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Department Chair: A tenured faculty member at the associate or full professor rank elected to serve as chair of an academic department as per PS 10.A.17.
- 2.2 As members of the faculty assembly, department chairs retain all rights and responsibilities of a faculty member.
- 2.3 Department Chair Job Description: The University recognizes that effective leadership at the department level is critical if the university is to be successful in carrying out its institutional mission. The department chair oversees a complex and broad operation, carrying out work within the shared governance structures of the university. The following description reflects key components of the role; prioritization and attention to these areas will vary according to department needs, university priorities, and available human and fiscal resources. These administrative duties constitute a subset of the distribution of a department chair's responsibilities as per the policy. It is incumbent upon the institution to consider the multiple components of the department chair's role when allocating tasks, resources, and expectations.
 - 2.3.1 Core Responsibilities:
 - Personnel supervision, hiring, development, and evaluation (staff and faculty)
 - Course schedule implementation and oversight
 - Budget development and expenditure

- Policy/procedure compliance and visibility
- Communication and responsiveness to issues
- Support of student success and addressing student needs
- Representation of students, faculty and programs with administrative

2.3.2 Other Areas:

- Assessment
- Curriculum/program revision and development
- Enrollment
- Strategic planning
- Retention
- Recruitment
- Relationships with external constituencies as relevant to departmental program needs (e.g., school/community partnerships, accreditation, internships, etc.)

3. POLICY

- 3.1 Department chairs manage the daily operations of the academic department and provide leadership for the academic programs housed within the department. Department chairs are responsible for representing the needs of students, faculty and programs to the administration, and are responsible for communicating and implementing university policies and procedures at the department level. In matters of educational policy and department governance, department chairs work under the shared governance procedures set forth in PS 01.A.03.

The university recognizes that effective leadership at the department level is critical if the university is to be successful in carrying out its institutional mission. Department chairs should be elected on the basis of their administrative effectiveness, academic achievement, leadership skills, and commitment to working with students, faculty, other university personnel and external constituencies in carrying out the University of Houston – Downtown’s (UHD) mission.

3.1.1 General Qualifications Needed to Serve as Department Chair

Department chairs must hold the terminal degree in one of the disciplines represented in the department or in a closely related field; in either case, the chair must be qualified to teach within the department they are chairing. Upon assumption of duties, the chair must be tenured and hold the rank of either associate professor or professor.

3.1.2 Determination of Procedures to be used in Selecting an Individual for the Department Chair Position

The position of department chair must be filled either by an internal search or a search open to both internal and external candidates (hereafter “open search”). The scope of the search will be determined by the tenured/tenure-track faculty in the department and the dean, in consultation with the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

3.1.3 Participants in the Selection of a Department Chair

Regardless of the type of search authorized, the selection of the department chair will be accomplished through the joint action of the faculty and the administration.

3.1.4 Department Chair’s Term of Service and Compensation

Department chairs serve a 12 month administrative assignment. Compensation is prorated based upon the faculty’s academic salary and includes an annual administrative stipend. Upon return to regular faculty status, the administrative stipend is eliminated and then the faculty salary is calculated on a typical nine month basis including any merit increases added to the salary proportionately.

For example, a faculty member earning \$75,000 on a nine-month contract would, upon becoming department chair, have an annualized salary of \$100,000 across 12 months, not counting the additional stipend. If the chair served for four years and received 3% raises each year, the chair’s salaries, minus stipend, would be approximately \$103,000, then 106,090, then \$109,273, and finally \$112,551. If, at this point, the department chair steps back to become regular faculty, their last salary, minus the stipend, will be converted to a nine-month salary and be \$84,413.

3.1.5 Normal Term Length

The term is for four years with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

3.1.6 Termination of Department Chair’s Administrative Assignment

There are two ways to terminate the administrative assignment of a department chair. First, in consultation with the tenured/tenure-track faculty of the department, the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and dean may at any time during the chair's term terminate the department chair's administrative assignment for cause.

Second, the tenured/tenure-track department faculty may convene a meeting where the concerns about the chair are presented. All tenured and tenure-track faculty must be invited to this meeting. After this meeting, the tenured faculty will vote on a resolution to terminate the administrative duties of the chair. Upon receiving a written resolution signed by at least two-thirds of the tenured faculty, the provost and dean will immediately terminate the administrative assignment of the department chair.

The department chair must be informed immediately once such action is taken, and the chair immediately ceases activities of department chair and returns to a faculty role. An assistant chair or tenured faculty member is selected by the dean to temporarily assume the department chair's duties. Within two weeks of such action, the tenured/tenure track faculty will meet to implement the procedures in 3.1.7.

A department chair removed via either of these two processes is ineligible for running for interim chair, and will become eligible for running for department chair in two years.

3.1.7 Interim Department Chair Procedures

If the position of department chair becomes vacant, the chair of the department rank and tenure committee will call a meeting of the department's tenured/tenure-track faculty to determine candidates for the open position. Within a business week of this meeting, the tenured/tenure-track faculty will recommend a candidate by majority vote to the dean, who will forward this recommendation to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. If this process fails to identify a department chair candidate from within the department, the dean may ask the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for an exception, whereby a tenured faculty member from another department within the same college will be appointed as interim department chair. An interim department chair may not serve in such a capacity for more than twelve months unless extraordinary circumstances exist and the recommendation for the extension of the term is agreed upon by a majority vote of the tenured/tenure-track faculty and the dean.

3.2 Search Procedures

After consultation with the dean about the position, the tenured/tenure track departmental faculty decide by majority vote whether there will be an internal or open search.

3.2.1 Internal Searches

If a department chair position is to be filled internally, the dean announces the position and a timetable for the search to be completed. The chair of the departmental rank and tenure committee conducts the election of a search committee from the tenured/tenure-track faculty according to departmental procedures and convenes the search committee. The composition of the search committee must reflect as far as possible the diversity of the disciplines in the department. Those faculty members who wish to be considered for the position of department chair submit a CV and a letter of intent to the dean and to the chair of the search committee. The search committee evaluates the qualifications of each candidate, arranges interviews, discusses the candidates' qualifications with the dean, conducts the balloting and communicates the results to the faculty and the dean. The person to serve as chair of the department is elected in a secret majority vote by the current department chair and the tenured/tenure-track members of the department. The dean recommends the selected individual to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. By majority vote of the tenured/tenure-track faculty, more than one name may be forwarded to the dean, who then selects an individual for the chair position and recommends that individual to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. Should the dean not concur with the selection of the faculty, the dean informs the search committee and meets with the search committee to discuss further action. In either case, the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost takes the recommendation to the President and advises the President on the appropriate course of action. The President approves the terms to be offered to the candidate and makes the final official offer.

3.2.2 Open Searches that Result in a New Faculty Hire

A new faculty member employed by the university to serve as a department chair is subject to the same qualifications given in Sections 3.1 and 3.1.1 of this policy and the same terms as a currently employed faculty member. Open searches are conducted according to the procedures set forth for a faculty member in [PS 10.A.13 Faculty Employment Policy](#) except that:

- 3.2.2.1 The responsibilities normally handled by the department chair are carried out by the college dean and the responsibilities normally handled by the dean are carried out by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.
- 3.2.2.2 PS 10.A.13 is to be modified as follows: The search committee is constituted as described in Section 3.2.1 of this policy. The search committee is responsible for evaluating candidates' credentials; for setting up, conducting and evaluating interviews; for discussing the candidates in detail with the dean; and for setting up the balloting procedures to determine by secret ballot the individual(s) to be sent forward to the dean. Upon concurrence by the dean, the dean makes a recommendation to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and PS 10.A.13 is followed.
- 3.2.2.3 PS 10.A.13 is modified as follows: If the dean does not concur with the selection of the faculty, the search committee and the dean meet to discuss further action.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Operating Details

The annual evaluation of the department chair is based upon an assessment of the department chair's activities during the preceding calendar year. The evaluation of the administrative work of the department chair is conducted by the department chair's dean using the process and documents described in 4.1.1. The evaluation of the teaching and scholarly/creative activity of the department chair is conducted by the members of the chair's department using the process and document referred to in 4.1.2.

The distribution of the elements of the department chair's evaluation score is based on the following components and weights, reflecting both the central role of administrative work as well as the importance of other contributions from the department chair in key areas of faculty life.

- 50%: Administrative
- 25%: Teaching
- 25%: Scholarly/Creative Activity*

*Upon request of the department chair, all or part of this 25% may be redistributed among the following areas per agreement between the department chair and the dean prior to the beginning of the calendar year in which the evaluation will occur: 1)

administrative work, and/or 2) non-administrative service. The department chair may suggest allocating all 25% to a single area or distribute between the two areas in amounts no less than 10% each.

Example A

60% Administrative (50% required + 10%)

25% Teaching (required)

15% Scholarly/Creative Activities

Example B

50% Administrative

25% Teaching (required)

25% Service (outside the scope of department chair)

4.1.1 Evaluation of the Administrative Work of the Department Chair

- 4.1.1.1 By January 1, the department chair and dean should meet to identify areas of focus tied to the department chair job description and consistent with the goal of the university and the college, keeping in mind the unique aspects and needs of the chair's department. This meeting also provides an opportunity for the department chair to request a reallocation of the scholarly/creative activities component as per section 4.1.
- 4.1.1.2 By April 10, there is a meeting between the department chair and the dean to discuss 1) the results of the faculty evaluation process described in Section 4.1.2, 2) the formal rating and written review for administrative work from the dean, and 3) the summary of all data collected on the questionnaire on the department chair's administrative work to which the tenured/tenure track faculty and lecturers in the department have responded. It is during this meeting that the chair and the dean will discuss the chair's performance goals for the ensuing calendar year.
- 4.1.1.3 In the event that additional or unforeseen demands are made upon the department chair throughout the year or that the department chair has the opportunity for new and important scholarly/creative activities or service, the department chair will communicate with the dean and the dean will take these issues into account as part of the evaluation process.

- 4.1.1.4 By December 1 in the first year of this policy's implementation, The Dean's Council and the Chair's Council will work together to develop a rubric for evaluation of the chair's administrative function. The final rubric will be agreed upon by a majority vote of both councils, with the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost as a single tie-breaking vote in case of a tie. This rubric will be used in all academic colleges across the university. It is not expected that each department chair in a college will have the same goals, mission, vision, or unique departmental aspects and/or needs, but rather that the dean will apply this rubric fairly across department chairs in the college. The rubric will be evaluated by the Dean's and Chair's Council on an annual basis and revised as needed by December 1.
- 4.1.1.5 By the third Monday of March of the following year, the department chair will report administrative work to the dean with a narrative that refers back to the chair's agreed upon goals and job description and provides examples of how the department chair performed in these key areas.
- 4.1.2 Evaluation of the Teaching and Scholarly/Creative Work of the Department Chair
- 4.1.4.1 The teaching and scholarly/creative work of the department chair will be evaluated by the elected faculty committee in the chair's department using the departmental rubric approved by the faculty. Reference [PS 10.A.05, Faculty Performance Evaluations](#) for details.
- 4.1.4.2 The teaching and instruction for a faculty member serving as department chair will be 25% or a weight factor of .25.
- 4.1.4.3 The scholarly/creative activities of a faculty member serving as department chair will be 25% or a weight factor of .25 unless otherwise determined as per section 4.1.
- 4.1.4.4 If the scholarly/creative activities of the department chair are reallocated to service outside of the department chair role, that, too will be evaluated by the elected faculty committee in the chair's department using the departmental rubric approved by the faculty.

4.1.3 Timetable

By December 1	Dean's and Chair's Councils have reviewed and ratified the rubric for evaluation of the chair's administrative function and have forwarded it to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.
By January 1	Chair and dean meet to establish the chair's performance goals for the ensuing calendar year.
By January 15	<u>Faculty Survey of Chair's Administrative Effectiveness</u> is distributed by dean to all full-time faculty in department (must be done by any method which protects anonymity).
By February 1	Faculty Surveys of Chair's Administrative Effectiveness are completed.
By March 1	Dean sends to department chair all numerical data and summaries of all written comments from the Faculty Survey of Chair's Administrative Effectiveness.
By third Monday in March	Department chair submits report on administrative work to dean and report on other areas to Department Review Committee.
By April 1	Department Review Committee submits formal written report and rating for teaching and scholarly/creative activity of the department chair to dean and to department chair, and dean submits written formal rating and written evaluation of department chair's administrative work to the department chair.
By April 10	Department chair meets with dean to discuss evaluation and to refine chair's goals, if necessary.
By April 20	Dean sends to VPAA a final report on administrative work along with report and scores from the Department Review Committee.

*Note: If a date falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline is deferred until the next business day.

4.1.4 Appeal of Evaluation

4.1.4.1 Appeal of Administrative portion of Evaluation

A department chair who is dissatisfied with the dean's evaluation of his/her administrative work may appeal to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost for reconsideration within five working days after the meeting with the dean. The department chair should submit the request and rationale in writing and may request a private meeting with the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost will render a decision within ten working days from receipt of the written appeal.

A department chair who is dissatisfied with the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost's decision regarding his/her administrative work may appeal to the President for reconsideration within five working days after the meeting with the dean. The department chair should submit the request and rationale in writing. The President will render a decision within ten working days from receipt of the written appeal.

4.1.4.2 Appeal of Faculty-Reviewed portion of Evaluation

A department chair who is dissatisfied with the departmental sub-committee's evaluation of his/her teaching, scholarly/creative activity, or service may appeal within five working days after receiving the evaluation. The appeal will follow the same chain of review and requirements as for faculty in PS 10.A.05 (e.g., first to departmental review committee).

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party: (Reviewer): Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost

Review: Every five years, or as necessary.

Signed original on file in the Office of Human Resources.

6. POLICY HISTORY

No prior issues of this policy.

7. REFERENCES

PS 01.A.03 Academic Shared Governance Policy

PS 10.A.05 Faculty Performance Evaluations
PS 10.A.13 Faculty Employment Policy
PS 10.A.17 Appointment of Department Chairs
Faculty Survey of Chair's Administrative Effectiveness